

# THE 50+ Connection

NEWS and EVENTS from the  
Howard County Office on Aging and Independence

A Publication of the Department of Community Resources and Services

Volume 11, No. 11 • November 2021

## Supporting the Multiple Role of Caregivers

Howard County's Caregiver Support Program understands the demands of caregiving. Caregivers are often thrust into their new roles without warning and may need to develop a whole new set of skills to care for an aging parent or relative. This can include managing the symptoms of a chronic condition, communicating with health care professionals, and handling personal care regimens — all in addition to meeting the needs of their own families and careers.

How effectively family caregivers balance their own needs with those of their new roles varies widely, but every journey has its challenges. The 2021 theme of National Family Caregivers Month: "Caregiver And" encourages family caregivers to celebrate all the identities and passions that enrich and make their lives complete. This is an essential component of self-care that can ultimately prevent caregiver burnout and depression ([caregiveraction.org/caregiverand](https://caregiveraction.org/caregiverand)).

### Online and In-Person Programs That Can Help

#### Trualta®

The Office on Aging and Independence's Caregiver Support Program offers free access to Trualta®, an e-learning portal designed to help family caregivers reduce stress, find local resources, and learn skills to provide care for their loved ones. Once enrolled, Howard County caregivers can log on at any time to learn about personal care, safety in the home, caregiver wellness, dementia care, and much more. Trualta® calls it "just in time learning" because it is there when you need it.

The portal is easy to use for all ages, completely private, and accessible 24/7. No app is required; the audio and video resources, tip-sheets, music therapy, and professional-level training may be viewed on any browser, computer, laptop, phone or tablet. Trualta® users choose the options that work best for them and can start implementing practical caregiver tips and techniques right away. Print material is available to supplement the digital platform, and the comprehensive learning library can help you prepare and plan for changing needs.

To arrange for a free demo and access to try Trualta®, contact Kathy Wehr, Caregiver Support Program Manager, at 410-313-5955 (voice/relay), or [kwehr@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:kwehr@howardcountymd.gov).

#### Dementia Live®

Dementia Live® is a high-impact, 30-minute immersion where participants experience firsthand what it's like to live with cognitive impairment and sensory change. Family caregivers and other participants can gain a deeper understanding and develop greater empathy for those in their care with dementia. The program also provides tools and techniques to improve communications, care processes and tips to make dementia-friendly changes to your home. Free sessions will resume in January.

For more information, contact Emily Leclercq, Resource Specialist, at Maryland Access Point of Howard County at 410-313-5917 (voice/relay) or [eleclercq@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:eleclercq@howardcountymd.gov).



A Message from  
Howard County Executive

### Calvin Ball



As the seasons change, it's vital that we continue to follow COVID-19 public health guidance and vaccine recommendations. Residents who are immunocompromised are eligible to receive a third dose of the Moderna or Pfizer vaccine. A third dose is necessary for those who are immunocompromised to complete the vaccine regimen.

As you may know, some residents who were vaccinated with Pfizer at least six months ago are now eligible for booster shots. If you are 65 and older, live in a nursing home or long-term care facility, have underlying health conditions, or have an increased risk due to your occupation, you should get a booster shot to help improve your immunity. If you have questions, please talk to your healthcare provider about your specific situation.

We continue to make progress on our Age-Friendly Initiatives by submitting Howard County's Action Plan to AARP for approval. Once approved, we can begin to implement the recommendations developed by our Age-Friendly workgroups. Thank you to everyone who served on one or more workgroups; we appreciate your commitment to this initiative! In less than two years, despite the challenges of working remotely, you helped us create a roadmap for an age-friendly community that will benefit residents of all ages and abilities.

As winter approaches, we are nearing the 20-month mark in dealing with the pandemic. Despite all the challenges we have faced, we have accomplished a great deal, especially in keeping one another safe. Thank you to all our residents who continue to work together to make our community stronger.

### CAREGIVER SUPPORT PROGRAM WEBINAR

#### Explaining the Process:

#### How OAI Supports Our Caregivers, Our Heroes

**Tuesday, November 30 • 10 a.m. to noon via Webex**

Learn more about caregiver support options offered by the Office on Aging and Independence's Home and Community-Based Services. Representatives of the following programs will discuss their areas of expertise, and explain about local resources and services for caregivers:

- Caregiver Support Program
- Maryland Access Point
- Community Living Program
- Senior Care
- Medicaid Supports Planning Unit
- Assisted Living and Nursing Home Placements

Register at <https://oaicaregiverwebinar.eventbrite.com>

For more information, contact Kathy Wehr at 410-313-5955 (VOICE/RELAY)

# THINGS TO DO AND DATES TO REMEMBER

## MEDICARE Open Enrollment



Open Enrollment for Medicare's 2022 health and prescription drug plans runs October 15 to December 7. At that time, Medicare beneficiaries can add, drop or switch plans. If you are currently enrolled in a stand-alone Medicare Part D prescription drug plan or a Part C Medicare Advantage plan, the Annual Notice of Changes mailed to you by your plan has updates to:

- Changes to the Formulary (dropping medications/changing restrictions)
- Changes to Costs (premiums, deductibles and drug costs)
- Pharmacy Network Changes
- Plan Termination Changes

**Howard County's State Health Insurance Program (SHIP)** can help you review your Medicare Prescription Drug coverage options. Call 410-313-7392 (VOICE/RELAY) to schedule a remote counseling appointment by phone with a certified SHIP counselor.



## Caregiver Support Group

**Third Monday of Every Month via Webex**

October 18, November 15, December 20 • 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.

*NOTE: This is a virtual group discussion; pre-registration is required*

Share your experiences in a supportive atmosphere with other caregivers in this SeniorsTogether peer group. Led by trained facilitators, the group meets virtually to:

- Learn about Hands-On Resources and Practical Tips
- Gain Emotional Support from Other Caregivers
- Create Connections for Social Networking
- Find Leisure and Self-Care Activities (journaling, exercise, etc.)

To register or for more information, contact Karen Hull at 410-313-7466 (VOICE/RELAY) or khull@howardcountymd.gov.

For the full schedule of SeniorsTogether peer support groups, visit [www.howardcountymd.gov/seniorstogether](http://www.howardcountymd.gov/seniorstogether).



## KNIT/CROCHET for VETERANS!

The **Howard County Office of Veterans and Military Families** is collecting handmade **SCARVES AND HATS** for military members.

Drop off your items by **Friday, November 5**, at the Department of Community Resources and Services, one of our 50+ Centers, or one of three additional locations.

**Visit us at [www.howardcountymd.gov/veterans](http://www.howardcountymd.gov/veterans) for details.**

For more information, contact Lisa B. Terry at 410-313-0821 (VOICE/RELAY) or [veterans@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:veterans@howardcountymd.gov).



## 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Howard County Parade

Sunday, November 7 • 9:30 a.m.

This annual event honors all branches of the US Military, the National Guard, First Responders, and their families. The parade will begin at the newly opened Merriweather District, travel along Merriweather Drive and turn north onto Little Patuxent Parkway, and will end at Millie Bailey Park, the future site of the Howard County Veterans Monument at Lake Kittamaquidi. This year's parade will feature marching bands, military units and hometown heroes.



## November 1, 2021 thru January 31, 2022

Join us online for the Beacon Virtual 50+ EXPO, featuring keynote speakers, classes, entertainment, informative videos and exhibitors.

Visit online at [www.beacon50expo.com](http://www.beacon50expo.com) starting November 1 and check out these Office on Aging and Independence videos created just for you!

- Virtual Grocery Store Visit with Carmen Roberts, Registered Dietitian
- Exercise Demo with Michelle Rosenfeld
- Entertainment with Steve Friedman: First a Play, Then a Musical
- Cooking with Jill Rose: Single-Serve Appetizers
- Partnering with Cultural Community Leaders: Laying the Groundwork
- Out and About in Howard County — A Virtual Tour
- Discover Your 50+ Center
- Partner Spotlight: Howard County Police Dept. Outreach Division

The Office on Aging and Independence is grateful to our Bronze-level sponsors for their generous support of this event:

**Maryland Vascular Specialists and Lorien Health Services**



The 50+ Connection is published monthly by the Howard County Office on Aging and Independence.

This publication is available in alternate formats upon request. To join the subscriber list, email [kahenry@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:kahenry@howardcountymd.gov).

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